

### emPower Program Overview

The emPower Program is a tri-County effort with San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties that was developed to help homeowners countywide overcome obstacles to making energy efficiency and cost saving improvements to their homes. By making residential home energy efficiency projects easier and more affordable through incentives, financing, qualified contractors and expert energy advice, emPower helps homeowners lower utility bills and be more comfortable in their homes. This program was launched in San Luis Obispo County in April 2014 and serves as the County's residential energy efficiency program.

The mission of the emPower Program is to help the community transform existing inefficient buildings by developing, leveraging and promoting innovative, voluntary market solutions designed to stimulate the economy and save energy. The emPower Program is funded by the California Energy Commission through Los Angeles County and the California Public Utilities Commission through Southern California Gas Company in alignment with the State's goal of lowering energy use in buildings.

#### 2015 Program Cycle

Building off of efforts initiated in 2014, the emPower Program offered the following services to homeowners and contractors in 2015:

1. **Marketing, Education, and Outreach:** Implement a localized marketing campaign and conduct educational outreach on the principles of home performance, the whole house approach to comfort and energy efficiency projects, and safety in relation to energy efficiency. Activities include community events, presentations, advertising campaigns, partnership development, web outreach, earned media, and collateral development.
2. **Local Customer Service:** Run a local, personal customer service experience, making team members available by phone, email, or in person for homeowners to seek guidance during upgrades. emPower will also provide designated County of San Luis Obispo staff access to a robust customer relationship management system free of charge.
3. **Expert Energy Advising:** Provide personalized energy advisors to the homeowners of San Luis Obispo. This will provide expert, unbiased, third party technical assistance to homeowners and contractors involved in the project.
4. **Residential Rebates:** Coordinate with all the Investor Owned Utility rebate programs offered including Energy Upgrade CA, CSI Solar Water Heating, CSI Solar (Photovoltaic).
5. **Residential Financing:** Offer San Luis Obispo homeowners the Home Upgrade Loan, developed through a partnership with Coast Hills Federal Credit Union, which leverages millions in private lending capital.
6. **Workforce Development/ Training:** Assist with local contractor engagement activities. emPower also provides contractor program support and advocacy, ongoing skill mentorship, facilitation of a Contractor Input Committee, media exposure, as well as access to program marketing materials, events, and other lead generation activities to support contractor sales.

The results of the services described above and offered in 2015 include the following:

- Hosted 26 community outreach events and workshops
- Engaged 1,212 attendees to participate in community events

## Attachment 7 - emPower Program Overview

- Coordinated 2 professional training and/or certification opportunities for local building professionals
- Instructed 12 local building professionals through training opportunities
- Advised 102 homeowners through the Energy Coach Service
- Completed 9 projects as a result of an Energy Coach Site Visit
- Completed 2 loans for homeowner projects
- Recruited 8 new building contractors

### 2016 Program Cycle

In 2016, the emPower Program will continue to offer all of the services described above. However, given the established marketing and branding presence of the emPower Program, there will be significantly less emphasis on marketing activities. In parallel, there will be significantly more emphasis on workforce development and contractor training and recruitment. Program staff will increase our contractor training and support efforts, particularly regarding the integration of rebate processing and third party technical advice – via our Energy Coach Service – into the service offerings of interested contractors.

It is anticipated that this increased emphasis on contractor training and recruitment will help create a workforce in San Luis Obispo County that is more capable of meeting the existing and growing homeowner demand for making easier and more affordable energy efficiency improvements to their homes. Training services and support will be provided through the Energy Coach Service, through utility partners, and from emPower Program staff. Trainings are expected to include home energy assessment testing, Energy Upgrade California rebate processing, in-the-field best practices coaching, classroom-style training events, building code compliance, green building focused sales training, business model development, protocols for hazardous building materials specific to retrofit construction, and in-the-field carbon monoxide safety testing.